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THE

TRUE ENGLISH GRAMMAR,

FOUNDED ON

AUTHORITY AS WELL AS PROPRIETY;

BEING

THE SECOND PART

OF AN

ATTEMPT TO FORM A GRAMMAR

OF

THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

NOT MODELLED UPON THOSE

OF THE

LATIN, GREEK,

AND OTHER

FOREIGN LANGUAGES.

BY WILLIAM B. FOWLE,
Instructer of the Monitorial School, Boston.

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DISTRICT OF MASSACHUSETTS, TO WIT:

District Clerk's Office,

Be it remembered, that on the nineteenth day of December, A. D. 1828, in the fiftythird year of the Independence of the United States of America, William B. Fowle, of the said district, has deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as author in the words following, to wit:

'The True English Grammar; founded on Authority as well as Propriety; being the Second Part of the Attempt to form a Grammar of the English Language, not modelled upon those of the Latin, Greek, and other Foreign Languages. By William B. Fowle, Instructer of the Monitorial School, Boston.'

In conformity to the act of the Congress of the United States, entitled 'An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned;' and also to an act, entitled 'An act supplementary to an act, entitled "An act for the encouragement of learning, by securing the copies of maps, charts, and books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies during the times therein mentioned;" and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.'

JNO. W. DAVIS,

Clerk of the District of Massachusetts.

PREFACE.

THE following Essay is, in substance, an address which I delivered about a year ago to the proprietors and pupils of the Monitorial School under my care. It would have remained unpublished, since, without any public defence, I had outlived the personal abuse which led to its composition, had not some gentlemen who have introduced the True English Grammar into schools under their care, repeatedly requested a copy of the manuscript address, that they might silence the cavils of some, who, never having heard of many of the leading principles of my grammar, had doubted whether there was any authority for them.

WILLIAM B. FOWLE.

Boston, Dec. 1828.

ENGLISH GRAMMAR.

THE subject of Grammar has occupied perhaps an undue portion of my thoughts from the moment I assumed the important duty of teaching it. I came to the task with a devotion to the system of Mr Murray as hearty as my idol could wish, and as firm a disbelief in the possibility of my being in error as was possessed by any of my fellow worshippers. When I stepped from the Board of Primary Schools to conduct, as I supposed for only a few months, the first school of Mutual Instruction ever established in Boston, I only proposed to improve the *forms* of instruction in the city of my affections, without suspecting that the *matter* as well as the manner was defective; and no words can express my dismay when I discovered that I must abandon my project, or assume a task for which neither my previous education nor my retired habits qualified me. An unprovoked

attack upon the system of Mutual or Monitorial Instruction, aimed at the public school then under my care, so alarmed its friends, that I reluctantly ventured upon a defence of such of its principles as I had adopted. I soon found myself drawn into a most unpleasant controversy, and, in spite of myself, it became personal. How my feelings were wounded, and how they were braced for the more exterminating controversies which arose as my success created alarm, concerns not my present purpose. Suffice it to say, that, opposition, or if you please, persecution, determined me to prosecute the design I had commenced from other motives.

How hard I labored to supply the defects of a common school education it is unnecessary for me to avow, but the design of this essay requires that I should briefly describe the course of my inquiries in regard to English Grammar. All went on very smoothly whilst I only required my pupils to commit the grammar to memory, and strictly to adhere to the division of words as marked in the dictionaries, and to the rules of syntax, which faithfully provide for every variety of expression, but give no reasons for any. Suspecting that the division of words adopted by the dictionaries was wrong, I ventured to banish every dictionary from school, and requir-

ed the pupil to determine the class of each word by the definition given of each class in Mr Murray's grammar. The pupils could not do this in one tenth of the cases that occurred. This experiment at first satisfied me that the *definitions* were incorrect, and then that the *classification* was defective. Distrust of my own judgment, however, led me not to innovate essentially, and therefore in preparing a practical Catechism of English Grammar for my pupils, I retained all the nine parts of speech, retrenching only the passive voice and compound tenses of the verb. At the same time I commenced a course of grammatical study which embraced all the treatises on English or general grammar that I could find. Although perfectly satisfied that the prevailing notions of English grammar had no foundation in the nature of our language, I did not venture to say so, until several years more of experience in teaching and study, had enabled me coolly to test the novelties to which I had been introduced. It was a subject of wonder to me, that, when such authorities for rejecting the received system of grammar existed, the learned in England and the United States had never raised the standard of reform; and this consideration induced me to abandon the attempt I had proposed, except so far as to

try the strength of popular prejudice, by offering a few strictures on Mr Murray's Grammar for publication in the American Journal of Education. These strictures, to my surprise, met with the warmest approbation of the judicious and accomplished editor, and excited no comment from any contemporary journal. I was induced to think that I had overrated the strength of prejudice, and at the request of some teachers whose curiosity was awakened by the *Strictures*, I determined to compile such an English Grammar as the best authorities, and the structure of our language authorized. This compilation, which I called 'The *True English* Grammar,' to distinguish it from those, which, pretending to be English, are more applicable to other languages—this compilation has brought upon me so much ridicule, that its principles must be defended or abandoned. I have chosen the first alternative for two reasons; justice to my own convictions, and the full belief that the strength of my cause is a mystery to many who sit in the high places of learning, and have spurned without consideration, and with no little personal abuse, my well meant endeavours to lay before the public the united opinions of powerful minds, of whom it is not my fault if they have never heard.

I hope I shall not be suspected of any af-

fectation of humility when I say that I hardly supposed The True English Grammar would be noticed in *any* Review, much less in the North American. Of the dozen books I had previously printed, not one had been even sneered at by a reviewer, and I had reason to think that the thirteenth would be suffered silently to appeal to the judgment of the community without the aid of patronage or the palsy of denunciation. Probably it would have been so, had not other motives than just ones impelled a writer to notice my book in the United States Literary Gazette, and in the North American Review. The evident object of these *reviews* was to render *me* ridiculous, and not to examine my book. This dignified object was accomplished at the expense of an exposure of ignorance, which has done more than any circumstance of my life to rectify my judgment of what are reputed literary men. I have almost ventured to thank Heaven that my father's poverty prevented my receiving a collegiate education, which would have furnished me with a diploma to wrap up and bury my intellect.

The history of these reviews is too daring a joke to be believed, were it not derived from unquestionable authority. It seems that the libel was offered for publication to the United States Literary Gazette, but was only receiv-

ed, upon condition that the editor might reject as much of it as he thought unworthy of a place in his distinguished journal. About one half was rejected, and the persevering author, thinking that what was not good enough for the United States Literary Gazette, might be good enough for the North American, collected the relics, offered them to the North American, and had the pleasure of seeing them accepted.

I was refused an opportunity of replying in the latter review, and had the further mortification of being told by the really distinguished editor, that he thought the reviewer's remarks '*just in the main.*' This was the more unexpected, because, as there was neither learning nor argument, nor authority, nor anything but coarse invective in the libel, I had a right to infer that *this* had met with his approbation, and that I was entitled to no other notice. Knowing, as I think he must, that the review proceeded from no friend of the author, he should have been cautious how he received it at all; but, after having done so, and allowed an anonymous writer to give dignity to his dulness by placing it in the first literary journal of our country, he should in justice have allowed me a few pages to correct misrepresentations that affected my character as a teacher, if he could not consistently allow me an opportunity of making reprisals.

I shall not waste a moment in considering

these reviews, for my character and my book are a sufficient reply to them. Nor do I wish to be considered a persecuted man, unable to defend himself, and therefore entitled to sympathy and protection. Little as I know of the history of man, I am not ignorant of that chapter, which teaches that persecution and oppression beget improvement; and, as the innovating Galileo did not perish, although in the face of the enlightened reviewers or inquisitors of his day he asserted that our planet was *round*, neither shall I be crushed, if, in an enlightened age, and fortified by the best authority, I pronounce the popular system of English grammar to be *flat*.

In prosecuting my inquiries into the true theory of English grammar, the chief works that have led to my conversion, and to which I shall presently appeal, are,—

1. 'Hermes, or a Philosophical Inquiry concerning Universal Grammar, by James Harris, Esq.,' which was published about the middle of the last century, and was the first, if not the only *general* grammar printed in our language. To its high character no scholar will expect me to certify.

2. 'Grammaire Générale, ou Exposition raisonnée des Elements nécessaires du Langage, pour servir de Fondement à l'Etude de toutes les Langues, par Beauzée.' This cel-

ebrated work was published about the same time with that of Harris, and is probably the best *general* grammar in the world.

3. 'Joannis Wallisii Grammatica Linguæ Anglicanæ.' Wallis was a Professor of Geometry at Oxford, one of the founders of the Royal Society, and author of several treatises besides his Grammar of the English Language, which is written in Latin, and was first published in 1653. As he is but little known in this country it may not be amiss to insert the following testimony of Beauzée. 'Wallis mérite aussi une place distinguée entre les fondateurs de la grammaire générale. Son livre renferme des principes très-philosophiques, très-féconds, et très dignes de l'esprit géométrique qui les discuta. Il ne paroît pas que le grammairien de Port Royal ait connu cet ouvrage ; *mais il est bien surprenant que même les grammairiens Anglois, qui sont venus depuis, en ait si peu profité ;*' that is, 'Wallis also merits a distinguished place among the founders of *general* grammar. His book contains principles highly philosophical, fruitful, and worthy of the geometrical mind that discussed them. It does not appear that the Port Royal grammarian was acquainted with the work, but it is very surprising that even the English grammarians who succeeded him have profited so little by it.' This testimony

to the high claims of Wallis is creditable to the discernment of Beauzée, inasmuch as it proves that this distinguished foreigner had attended to the structure of our language enough to see that Ben Johnson, and other popular grammarians, had greatly mistaken its peculiarities.

4. 'The Diversions of Purley,' by John Horne Tooke.

5. The article 'Grammar' in Rees' Cyclopedia.

6. The Rational and Arbitrary Grammars of the English language, which form the first volume of the Etymological Interpreter of James Gilchrist, a distinguished Scotchman, as ingenious and learned as he is bold and unfettered by the schools.

7. 'A Treatise on the Etymology and Syntax of the English Language, by Alexander Crombie, LL. D.'; an attempt to reconcile the more philosophical with the prevailing system. A work distinguished for its candor, learning, and research, and which, more than any other work, may be considered the basis of the 'True English Grammar.'

8. 'Elémens d'Idéologie par M. Destutt Comte de Tracy,' the second volume, which is a general grammar, and is particularly valuable, as it is a continuation of his celebrated treatise on the 'Origin of Ideas.'

9. The subject of Grammar in the 'Systematic Education,' of the Rev. W. Shepherd, Rev. J. Joyce, and Rev. Lant Carpenter;—a work which is remarkable for its fair and lucid abstracts of every science embraced in a polite education.

10. 'An Essay on Language, as connected with the Faculties of the Mind, and as applied to Things in Nature and Art,' by William S. Cardell.

In the course of this inquiry I have also examined the best grammars of several modern languages, for the purpose of comparative analysis; the Anglo-Saxon Grammar of Bosworth, which is enriched with many valuable remarks upon the Etymology of the English language; the article *Grammar* in other Encyclopedias than Rees'; the grammars of Ben Johnson, Dr Lowth, L. Murray, and above thirty of their followers. To these may be added a course of English *reading*, for the purpose of tracing the progress of our language, to ascertain how far the words called particles retain their original meaning and use.

The authors I have named are not only the *best*, but I believe the *only* distinguished writers upon our language and upon general grammar, and so far as *authority* is concerned, the prevailing system is strangely defi-

cient. I say *strangely*, because it is really remarkable that every philosophical writer upon the grammar of our language, should reject the popular system as absurd and unphilosophical, and yet this system *continues* to be used, and any attempt to change it is sure to meet with opposition and opprobrium. While on the subject of authorities, I may be excused for noticing the remarks of a sagacious critic in the Review, which even the poetry of Bryant could not keep alive, in regard to the *source* whence my grammatical opinions have been drawn. After accusing me of insufferable 'egotism,' he says, 'Mr Webster's grammar will be found in many respects the *principium et fons* of Mr Fowle's grammar, the very fountain head of his reforms.' Again, he adds, 'These and many other instances, which are not casual coincidences, prove at least that the True English Grammar is not quite so new a thing as its writer would have it thought.'

It would not mortify me, if it were true, that Noah Webster thought as I do upon the subject of grammar, for I have no mean opinion of his philological acquirements; but, unfortunately for the reviewer, I never saw Mr Webster's grammar, nor do I know what are the peculiar views it contains. I endeavoured to find it, but it was not for sale in

the city. While I may lay claim to some merit for my industry in examining systems, and selecting such parts as seemed indisputably correct, in which humble though laborious task the exercise of my judgment was sometimes convenient, I have never laid claim to the merit of *originality*. In the first paragraph of my preface, after briefly alluding to my authorities, I say—'My chief merit, if there be *any*, consists in my attempt to collect the hints scattered in these writers, to mould them into something like a system, and then, by suitable illustrations and practical exercises, to adapt them to general use.' Again, in the latter part of the grammar, for fear that some dull one might suspect me of originality, I say—'Let it not be supposed that a more rational system of grammar than that which prevails has never been proposed, or that *we* claim any merit on the score of discovery. Numerous distinguished philologers, at the head of whom is Horne Tooke, have, in their elaborate works, proved that the prevalent system has no adaptation to our language. These works, however, are but little known in this country, and *so far as they affect the mode of teaching*, are a dead letter. We shall freely draw upon them, &c. &c.' (p. 156.) Is it fair after this to accuse me of laying any claim to originality? Is it

probable, that, in the same book which contains the remarks just repeated, I should assert any such claim? Feeling that in publishing a compend of English grammar, I neither offended against the laws of morality, nor encroached upon the rights of others, I had too much self-respect to be driven from my position by the vociferations of offended prejudice, the sneers of affected learning, or the insinuations of concealed enemies. It was not to be expected that the learned would countenance any thing not humbly laid at their feet, and which proceeded from one not entitled to boast of his attainments. It was not to be expected that *teachers* would receive with complacency a system of grammar, which struck at the root of the system which their education and habits of teaching had rendered so familiar to them, that no farther effort, on their part was necessary to teach it. All my readers may not be aware of the immense weight of this consideration, but it is my honest conviction that there are no greater enemies to improvements in education than schoolmasters. This arises in a great measure, as I have hinted, from their very natural attachment to the *mode*, and even the very *books*, in which they have been educated. Even those who are not teachers must be sensible in some degree of the pow-

er of this prejudice; but teachers afford the most striking examples of that habitual mental indolence which is induced by the use of books and modes of teaching with which men are familiar, and which, in time, causes them to shrink from the task of fitting themselves for teaching any *new* thing, or any *old* thing in a *new way*. You must have observed that it is a rare circumstance to find a teacher, who, while he is communicating to his pupils the stock of knowledge on hand, is also pressing forward in pursuit of more knowledge, with the ardor of a devoted scholar.

Popular systems on every other branch of science or knowledge, have either fallen entirely, or undergone important changes, in consequence of the researches of practical philosophers. Is it, then, fair to suppose that the first system of grammar is as perfect as it can be, and any attempt to improve it, is presumptuous and vain? The course which has been pursued in regard to me and my grammar, would imply all this, and it is to be feared that many who have not carefully considered both sides of the question, really believe that mere perversity, or a desire for *infamous* celebrity, rather than none, has induced me to apply a torch to the temple before which they have been accustomed to prostrate their understandings. I have as-

serted that I am entitled to no such celebrity, and I shall presently offer such evidence of the fact as can be exhibited in this essay.

Grammar may be either *general* or *particular*. It is not surprising that all nations, with the same organs of speech, and the same wants, should have many principles of language in common, and it is the business of general grammar to ascertain what these common principles are. But it is not more surprising that peculiar circumstances in the condition of nations should have given peculiarities to the language of each, entirely different from the language of others. It is the office of *particular* grammar to ascertain what these peculiarities are. Thus, general grammar teaches us that all languages have a class of words called nouns, or names of things, and that these nouns have a distinction called gender. Particular grammar teaches us that, *in Latin*, all males are of the masculine gender, all females of the feminine, and all things without sex are of the masculine, feminine, or neuter gender; that, *in French*, all males are masculine, all females feminine, and all things without sex either masculine or feminine; in fine, that, *in English*, all males are masculine, all females feminine, and all things without sex,

neuter. An English grammar, therefore, ought to exhibit all the peculiarities of our language, every principle which distinguishes it from the grammar of every other language. Does the popular system of English grammar do this, or does it overlook distinctions which are important, and teach others which are erroneous? The history of this system will, in part, answer these inquiries. Previous to the time of Dr Lowth, English grammar was not considered worthy of attention in a complete course of classical education. His grammar, he informs us in the preface, was the first that was adapted to familiar use, and as the acquisition of Latin was with him an all important concern, his grammar, he tells us, was calculated to prepare the English student for entering upon the study of Latin. Dr Lowth, no doubt, derived most of his opinions from Johnson and the other grammarians who preceded him, for he assures us that 'he complied with the *common* divisions, and retained the received terms, as far as reason and truth'--and he should have added, *his professed object, the preparation for Latin*,—'would permit.' The opinion that the received system of English grammar is based upon the grammars of the dead languages, particularly the Latin, did not originate with me. I have found the remark in

every philosophical treatise on our language that I have seen; but as Dr Lowth himself declares the fact, I see no reason why we should not take his word for it, without endeavouring to prove it upon him. Now it is evident that Dr Lowth's grammar is the basis of Mr Murray's. Three fourths of Mr Murray's distinctions are not only adopted, but his definitions are mostly taken, word for word, from Dr Lowth's; and, indeed, the only considerable difference between them is, that Dr Lowth has but three tenses to the verb, the present, past, and future, and includes Mr Murray's potential mood in his subjunctive. So far as *invention* is concerned, Mr Murray has no claims to our notice; but the more practical form of his grammar enabled it to supplant its progenitor, and now Lowth's is disused.

Perhaps this is not an improper place or time for me to remark, that, while my examination of this subject has led me to think meanly of Mr Murray as a grammarian, and perhaps to express my thoughts too freely, and without a proper distinction between the man and the grammarian, no one entertains a higher respect for the amiable character which he sustained, and no one more sincerely regrets that any allusion of mine could possibly be construed into personal abuse, or disrespect for his virtues.

This subserviency to Latin grammar is, then, the great fault of the prevailing system of English grammar. If a Roman should inquire how we express his future tense *amabo*, it would be correct to say that we use the phrase *I shall love;* but he would laugh at the idea of our calling this *phrase* a future tense, it having no resemblance to that of his language, which effects, by a change of termination, what we can only effect by the use of two verbs and a pronoun. There can be no doubt that the verbal terminations in Latin, and similarly constructed languages, were once separate words, which afterwards coalesced, as our simple verb and the termination *ed* have done; but because this actual difference of termination seems to authorize the numerous tenses, moods, voices, &c. of Latin, I see no reason why all these distinctions should be transferred to English. In excuse for this propensity to ape the dress and style of the learned languages, it is speciously urged that unless you so construct the English grammar as to give the pupil some idea of the moods, tenses, and forms, he must encounter when he enters upon the study of Latin, he will find the Latin grammar too difficult, and will be discouraged. Even allowing, *what is not the case*, that the forms retained in Murray's grammar exactly cor-

respond to those in the Latin grammar, there is no *reason* in the argument; for, in the first place, not more than one child in a thousand studies Latin after having studied English grammar, and nothing can be more unfair than to tax the 999 merely to aid the 1000th. Again, children are put to the study of Latin with minds more matured by age than when they commence the study of English grammar. Is it reasonable to teach them the more difficult distinctions when very young, lest they should not be able to comprehend them when the judgment is more mature? Finally, as Latin is no longer what it was in the infancy of English grammar, the universal language of learning and science; as French, and other modern languages are more studied, and, to say the least, *as* useful, is it reasonable to have a grammar which shall only aid us in the acquisition of one language, and that perhaps the least studied? Is it not wiser to have a grammar which we can call our own, that we may be enabled to compare the *real* structure of our language with that of others, instead of being obliged, as we now are, to compare the grammars of French, German, &c. with our Anglo-Latin one?

It is to be regretted that a grammar of our language was not formed at a period when our

ancestors were free from any servile deference to Latin and Greek. We should then have had a proper English grammar, one that would have pointed out the peculiar construction of our own tongue, with such distinctions of words as were authorized by their real meaning and use, and just as many moods, tenses, cases, &c., as there were real changes of terminations,—and no more. Some irregularities which have since deformed our language, would thus have been prevented, and regular rules for the extension of the language would have been given. This was not done, and it therefore becomes the business of philosophical grammarians to make as near an approach to such a grammar as is consistent with the present condition of our language, rejecting all the useless foreign distinctions which have been admitted into the popular gammar, and, without rejecting such irregularities as have obtained, carefully preventing their increase. This task has been attempted by the writers whom I have cited as my authorities, and I have been the humble instrument of laying the result of their labors before my pupils in a practical and popular form. 'This is the head and front of my offence, no more.'

English grammar, as it is generally defined, is a system of rules founded upon the writ-

ngs of those authors who have had the highest reputation for correctly understanding the meaning and use of words. That the grammar of our language varies from age to age must be allowed, or we should not see the common translation of the scriptures, the work of the *élite* of the English universities, arraigned for numerous breaches of what is now the popular syntax; we should not see the works of him of Avon, who stamped immortality upon the language, presented to our children as specimens of false grammar. There was a time, before grammars were invented to clip the wings of fancy, and shackle the feet of genius, when it was considered more important to express a thought clearly and forcibly, than, as now, prettily and grammatically; when genius would as soon have stooped to accommodate itself to a rule of syntax, as the eagle would to take lessons from the domestic goose; when grammarians were accustomed to *note* the movements of genius, and not prescribe rules for them. Alas! for our literature that these times have gone by. Alas! for the human mind that it must invent no new mode of expressing its ideas, lest there should be no authority in any popular grammar for the perhaps heaven inspired effort.

Had the freedom of those glorious writers,

to whose works an attempt has been made to apply the rules of modern syntax, been imitated; had critics and grammarians searched their works for inspiration, rather than misplaced prepositions, it is my sincere conviction that our language would have developed a higher degree of power, than it ever will attain so long as those who perhaps never glowed with a thought, are allowed to prescribe the degree of warmth to which genius may ascend. It is my sincere conviction that fewer irregularities would have crept into the language had no grammars existed than have been authorized by grammarians; for it should be understood that the first of our grammarians, finding that good writers differed upon many points, instead of endeavouring to reconcile these discrepances, absolutely perpetuated them by citing opposite usages, and giving high authorities, for both. To this we owe all the irregularity which exists in the personal terminations of verbs, some of the best early writers using them promiscuously, some using them uniformly, and others making no use of them, and really they are of no use but to puzzle children and foreigners, perplex poets, and furnish an awkward dialect to that exemplary sect of Christians, who in every thing else study simplicity.

Language is progressive, and is inclined to right itself; and had the first grammarians taken half the pains to discourage departures from regularity, that they took to furnish authority for such departures, they might have done much towards perfecting the language. The question now is, whether it is too late to undertake the important work of producing simple uniformity in every part of our language. The general opinion is, that such an attempt would be hopeless; but it appears to me that there are some circumstances which prove that, so far from being hopeless, the work is gradually going on in spite of grammarians. One of these propitious circumstances is the fact, that the common people, always the last to change their modes of speech, are inclined rather to bend irregular words to the regular rules or analogy of the language; for many of the vulgarisms, which bring upon them the sneer of grammarians, are only the use of the regular for the irregular form of verbs and other parts of speech. To this we probably owe the fact that of our hundred and fifty irregular verbs forty have acquired the regular form, and about sixty more are fluctuating between regularity and irregularity, and only want the countenance of a few influential writers to induce them to discard their deformities.

Another propitious circumstance, is the growing disuse of the subjunctive mood, 'If I be, If he love,' and such legitimate expressions, savouring more of pedantry than of elegance.

Another encouraging circumstance is the fact that, within twenty years, without any direct effort on the part of any one, as great a change has been wrought in the pronunciation of our language as the most enthusiastic reformers could have reasonably wished; and this success is due in a great measure to the fourth and last encouraging circumstance I shall mention—that, whereas those ineffectual attempts to reform the language of the common people, which are hung up *in terrorem* by our reviewers, were made upon ignorant and semibarbarous nations, ours must be made upon a people comparatively cultivated, and therefore more capable of estimating any improvement. Mithridates *commanded* his barbarous subjects to surrender their prejudices, without pretending to offer reasons which he knew his people were not able to comprehend; but, without any other authority than truth, we offer our improvements to a people capable of judging of their propriety.

The reformation of grammar, or rather, the removal of all anomalies and irregularities is *possible*, and it is our duty to inquire

in what manner we can aid in this desirable work. The reason why every attempt to restore to analogy an irregular word is immediately opposed by some who pretend to understand what is called grammar, is, that the prevailing system of English grammar affords no information in regard to the history of our language, the *origin* of the irregularities, and the utility of reform; and the tendency of the system is to keep its devotees eternally ignorant. A shoe has been made, which fits all the deformities of the grammatical foot, and it has been worn so long, and sits so easily, that we do not think it worth our while to reduce the distortions, and restore the simple and elegant proportions of the foot.

A philosophical grammar, which exposes the irregularities of the language, and the careless manner in which they have been introduced and continued, lessens our respect for them, and reconciles us to every reasonable attempt to reform them. It teaches us how worse than useless many of these irregularities are, and how absurd it is to invest them with all the dignity and importance of essential principles.

I know not that I shall find a more suitable occasion for noticing a charge, which both the reviewers before alluded to, and some

unfriendly teachers, have industriously circulated, that the public might be deterred from any longer entrusting me with the grammatical instruction of their children. This charge is contained in such remarks as the following from the United States Literary Gazette.

'Will parents consent to teach their children a system of grammar, which treats of words, not as men write and speak them, but as Horne Tooke and Mr Fowle think that they should be written and spoken? If the rising generation are to profit by these improvements, they must, for one hundred years at least, cut themselves off from all sympathy with those about them, in whatever is connected with language and letters, appealing "from the authority of Addison and Swift to the woods of Germany."' The same charge is repeated in the North American Review.

The fair inference from these extracts is, that in my grammar I require a use of language different from that generally authorized; that common usage is outraged by my mode of teaching grammar, and that my pupils will use a language one of these days hardly intelligible to those around them. What could have led to this misrepresentation I cannot imagine, unless it were a disregard for truth, or downright stupidity. I defy the most cap-

tious to produce a single sentence in my book which authorizes any departure from good usage. I defy any one to prove that, in my teaching, I have ever encouraged the slightest departure from any well established rule of grammar. I appeal to the conversation and compositions of my pupils, which are not marked by any singularity of style—I appeal to the reader's judgment, whether, so far as grammatical punctilios are concerned, I write anything to offend. My grammar has been misrepresented, and from my attempts to determine the etymology, that is, the nature, origin, meaning, and use of certain words, inferences have been drawn which no honest mind could for a moment authorize. I should wish no harder position to defend than theirs, who assert that a more thorough and radical knowledge of words, leads to the misuse of them, and that calling words by different *names* alters the *nature* of them. One paragraph of many in the grammar, should have satisfied every fair mind that these unfavorable inferences are unjust, and I repeat it, that it may be seen how carefully I guarded against leaving any grounds for them. In the last paragraph but one of my book, after alluding to the arbitrary grammar in general use, it is said,—'This grammar was not dictated by reason, and therefore cannot be re-

ferred to any rational principles. But though we wish to see it discarded by a general disuse of all anomalies and unmeaning terminations and changes, yet such reform must be effected by the influential members of the literary world; all others must be content with established usage. They must endeavour to write and speak *grammatically*, merely to avoid the imputation of ignorance and illiterateness. In this, as well as in so many other things, we must submit to bondage, for we are not free to follow reason unless we have sufficient hardihood to set public opinion at defiance.' It is one thing to point out the defects of a language, and another *rashly* to attempt to remedy them. It is one thing to overturn a defective, time-serving system of grammar, and another to overturn a language, as it is one thing to disprove a human creed, and another to subvert the simple and sublime truths of the gospel. Wo to that edifice, which must fall, if the *scaffolding* which has been raised by those who wished to change its simple proportions, and the *rubbish*, which abuse and ignorance have heaped around its base, be removed.

By some misunderstanding of my book, or ignorance of what part of my system is really derived from Horne Tooke, my reviewers have thought it advisable to sneer at his

qualifications as an etymolygist, and to ridicule his pretensions to an acquaintance even with his own language. Ever since this discovery of the true nature of what grammarians had ignorantly supposed to be new species of words, and which in their darkness they had named prepositions, adverbs, conjunctions, &c., it has been fashionable for pert reviewers and grammarians to revile the great man to whom we are indebted, at least for showing the right path. I have only adopted Tooke's Theory of Particles, and *this* only when his opinions were supported by powerful authority, and therefore I am not bound in my own defence to defend him; but I should do injustice to my feelings as an American and a man, if I did not, in the same place where he has been defamed, renounce all participation in the defamation.

It may not be known to all my readers that John Horne Tooke was a devoted supporter of the principles advanced by those who achieved our independence. Although an Englishman, his heart was warm, and his pen active in our cause; and when the news of the first holy libation of patriot blood at Lexington reached England, it was John Horne Tooke, who, in the face of exasperated power, dared to write and head a subscription for the relief of the widows and or-

phans of those who had been *murdered*, as he called it, on the plains of Lexington in Massachusetts. This was the offence which brought down upon him the vengeance of the ministry; it was for this *high treason*, as it was called, that he was imprisoned, fined, and all but destroyed. No wonder that this persecution embittered his pen, and led him to mingle keen reproaches of oppression with subjects purely literary; but, although it wounded his heart, it did not weaken his mind, for he afterwards became a learned and laborious etymologist, as he had frequently shown himself an elegant and powerful writer. At that eventful time when Junius, like an unseen spirit of darkness was striking to the dust, kings and nobles and mighty men; when to be silent under his reproaches was death, and to remonstrate, annihilation; this humble Tooke, jealous of a character which through persecution he had preserved untarnished, but which the invisible thunderer had vilified—this contemptible writer, whose style it is dangerous to imitate, met and defeated his mighty adversary. Junius, the haughty Junius, withdrew from the contest; and lest he should be pursued, threw behind him the only concession he ever condescended to make to mortal man, and the only compliment he ever bestowed upon the style of

those who ventured upon the desperate task of self justification.*—I can only account for the disposition which some Englishmen and a few unworthy Americans have shown to depreciate his literary character, upon the supposition that there is a simplicity in his etymological discoveries, that puts to shame the grammatical systems of the day, which it is the interest of certain persons to support; so that, rather than confess their errors, and acknowledge their obligations to Mr Tooke, they cry out, with the mortified courtiers whom Columbus taught the simplest method of setting an egg on end, 'any body could do that!'

After these preliminary remarks, which I hope are not unauthorized by the circumstances of the case, I shall proceed to a more particular examination of the question at issue, the necessity and propriety of grammatical reform.

Beauzée, alluding to a remark of l'Abbé des Fontaines, that 'reading French Grammars diminished his respect for the French language, and almost induced him to despise it,' observes, 'I confess that, to judge of our

*Junius, smarting under the lash of Mr Horne, who accused him of never having done any thing for the public, frankly says 'Is there no labor in the composition of these letters? Mr Horne, I fear, is partial to me and measures the facility of my writings by the fluency of his own.'

language by the manner in which its system is explained in our grammars, one might come to the same conclusion he did. But will any one who has read Bossuet, Bourdaloue, La Bruyère, La Fontaine, Racine, Boileau, Pascal, &c. authorize such a conclusion? Such a one will conclude that the disorder, anomalies, and irregularities exist only in our grammars, and that our grammarians have not yet apprehended with sufficient justice, nor examined with sufficient detail, the mechanism and genius of our language. By what principle of logic can he see so many wonders produced by different writers, whose language and style according to our grammars are awkward, irregular, and barbarous, and yet not suspect in the least degree the correctness of our grammarians?' (p. 320.) These remarks, with the substitution of Shakspeare, Milton, Bacon, &c. for the French writers, are as applicable to our language as to that of Beauzée.

Apologizing for the great changes in the prevailing system which his grammar proposed, the same author remarks, that 'The novelty of a system cannot be a sufficient reason for rejecting it, otherwise men once entangled in error could never extricate themselves.' And again, 'Grammarians, and they alone, will have to make themselves ac-

quainted with the new system, which trouble they should disregard when the right understanding and propagation of truth are concerned. Their successors will understand it without difficulty, because they will not be prejudiced in favor of the old system, and they will understand the new more easily, because it will be more true, more expressive, more rational, more systematic.'

I will give one other extract from the preface of Beauzée, because it not only points out the errors, which I believe to exist, but also pays a well merited compliment to Wallis, one of my authorities beforementioned. 'The rude decisions of the first grammarians, (Latin and Greek,) scrupulously repeated from age to age, without ever having been subjected to examination, have been servilely applied to every idiom, (modern language,) without distinction or modification. Their numerous mistakes have only multiplied error, thickened the darkness which enveloped true principles, and degraded the science; but Sanctius, *Wallis*, Arnaud, and Du Marsais have shown by their excellent works that the art of speaking differs but little from the art of thinking, which is considered so honorable, useful, and appropriate for man.'

If then it be allowed that grammar, as an art, is not yet perfect, and that all which is now excellent has not always been so, it must be confessed that every attempt at improvement should be encouraged, and he contributes something to the cause of truth, who only calls in question the impossibility of reform. The necessity of reform has been urged by all the eminent grammarians of every language that I have seen. Beauzée, whom I have before cited, and whom I prefer to cite, as he is the only authority mentioned, although his opinions were mistaken, by my reviewer, says, in his preface, 'I should be glad to ask those who would retain the prevalent notions of grammar, whether they think the elementary books in vogue, the principles they maintain, and the long, embarrassing, and ridiculous method which is the necessary consequence of it, are more clear, more simple, or better adapted to the feeble intellect of children.' Then, after quoting Father Lami, who says, 'They put my head in a sack and bid me walk—whipping me, though unable to see, every time I go wrong. I understand nothing of all the rules I am compelled to learn by heart'—He adds, 'In fact, children, who as yet have no prejudices, will receive my system as easily as any other, when it is reduced to elementa-

ry principles. What do I say? They will receive it more easily, since it contains a less number of principles. Nothing is so clear as truth, when it is taken in its primitive simplicity, and error alone carries darkness with it.'

I prefer to give these ideas in the language of others, because I wish it to be understood that I claim no deference for my own opinion. I have remarked that Dr Lowth expressly declares, in his preface, that his English Grammar, the basis of Murray's, was made to facilitate the study of Latin, and that Lowth closely followed Ben Johnson. I shall now translate a passage from the preface of Dr Wallis's English Grammar, which will show that the same deference to the dead languages had distinguished the very earliest of our grammarians. After stating that, not only theology, but every other kind of learning existed in English, either in original works or translations, and made it worthy of notice by foreigners, to whom, and even to Englishmen, the difficulties of its acquisition were so great as to confuse and discourage them, he adds, 'To remedy this evil, I have undertaken this work, that by briefly stating the principles of a language very simple in itself, it may be more easily learned by foreigners, and its true system better understood by our

own countrymen. I am not ignorant that others before me have made the same attempt, particularly Dr Gill, in Latin, Ben Johnson, in English, and Henry Hexham, in French, but none of them in the way which I consider best adapted to the purpose; for all of them, by forcing our English rules to conform to the Latin, have inculcated many useless rules about the cases, genders, and declensions of nouns, the conjugations, modes, and tenses of verbs, the regimen of both nouns and verbs, and other similar notions, which are entirely foreign to our language, and therefore rather increase its confusion and obscurity, than aid in its illustration.'

The necessity of correct classification in every branch of science is not disputed, and the imperfect systems of classification adopted in the infancy of every science, cannot have escaped the notice of every scholar. One example will illustrate my meaning. Mineralogy, as a science, was but imperfectly understood by the ancients, although most of the valuable metals and minerals were known to them, and had been named and classed. As a proof of this, we are informed that the breastplate of the high priest of the Jews, and the foundations of the wall of the New Jerusalem, were composed each of twelve different precious stones. The twelve stones

named in each case were the most precious in the popular nomenclature; and the time has been, when it would have been impious to declare, that, in attempting to select twelve *different* stones, the sacred writers have selected the *same* stone twice under different names. They judged of minerals by the colour and outward form, two very deceptive characteristics; but at the revival of science, chemical analysis was brought to aid in the classification, and the errors of the ancient mineralogists have been exposed. But the new classification has been generally adopted, although obstinately opposed for a time by those who feared that its adoption would shake the faith of the ignorant in the infallibility of the sacred writers, not considering that the Jewish and Christian scriptures are revelations of *moral* truth, and not of *natural* science; and that, had not these truths been clothed in language and terms, familiarly known to men, they would not have been understood.

The case of English grammar is not dissimilar. The breastplate of *our* high priest, in the infancy of grammatical science, was composed of *nine* stones, so precious that we may not examine them. We have suspicions that the cunning men were deceived in the colour and outward form of the stones, but

these suspicions must not be whispered. We wish to analyze these stones, but are threatened with literary extinction if we approach too near. All the popular books speak of nine different stones, and would you destroy the authenticity of these books? The virtues of the mysterious number *nine* are universally acknowledged, and we have spent our lives in studying and explaining them, shall we lose our labour and give them up? What if there *are* in reality but *three* stones, the people do not know it. They are willing to pay the priests for explaining differences which do not exist, and as thereby we have our living, it is impolitic, unprofitable, dangerous, impious to publish the truth and expose the craft.

This is the real state of the case. The mistake of the early grammarians is discovered, the nine parts of speech will not bear the test of analysis. I have found no respectable writer on English grammar, who does not object to the common division of words, although there is a difference of opinion in regard to what division is preferable. Harris has but four parts of speech, substantives or nouns, attributives or verbs, definitives or articles, and connectives or conjunctions. He says Plato had but two, the noun and the verb; Aristotle agreed with Harris in having the same four; the latter

stoics made five, others made six, by detaching the pronoun from the noun, the participle and adverb from the verb, and preposition from the conjunction. The Latins detached the interjection from the adverb. Vossius says, 'Their opinion is the most ancient who held that there were but *three* classes of words. The Hebrews borrowed this division from the Arabs, and the old Greeks adopted it from the Oriental languages.' Horne Tooke would have all English words resolved into nouns. Dr Crombie, after remarking that every number of parts of speech from one to ten has had its advocates, says, 'This strange diversity of opinion has partly arisen from a propensity to judge of the character of words more from their *form*, which is a most fallacious criterion, than from their *import* or *signification*.' p. 18. The learned writer of the article 'Grammar' in Rees' Cyclopedia, after enumerating the nine parts of speech, says, 'This division has obtained with little variation in other modern languages, *and has been derived, on the authority of ancient grammarians, from the languages of Greece and Rome.* This classification, however general and convenient in a popular view, is by no means to be admitted in a philosophical grammar, and the few philosophical writers in English or other tongues have been

sensible of the inaccuracy of the popular division.' p. 3. There can be no doubt that every language is composed of the same classes of words, be they what they may, and it is as certain, that in minor respects each language has its peculiarities. Some grammarians class adjective with nouns and call them nouns-adjective; some call all the four last classes of Murray particles, some call verbs adjectives, &c. &c. In this diversity of opinions it certainly can be no presumption in any one to doubt the correctness of the prevailing classification.

As I intend to produce a few authorities for every important principle of my grammar, the limits of this essay require that I should make a proper selection, referring the reader for further information, to the authorities already named. However these grammarians may differ in regard to the best division of words, I find that they agree *substantially* in the division I have adopted, viz.—1. *Nouns*, or names of things or actions; 2. *Verbs*, or words expressing the operations of some agent; 3. *Adjectives*, or words used to qualify, limit, or in some way distinguish one noun from another. Under these three heads, therefore, I arrange the Articles, Pronouns, Adverbs, Prepositions, Conjunctions, and Interjections of common grammars. I shall

say a few words upon each of these *rejected terms*.

1st. Of the Article. So generally is it conceded that the words *a*, *an*, and *the*, belong to the same class as *one* and *this*, that I am almost ashamed to apologize for placing them among the adjectives ; but, as in the popular grammar an attempt is made to show a real difference between the use of the articles and the adjectives, I will cite the opinions which are most concisely expressed in my authorities.

After enumerating all the articles and all the pronouns but those of the first and second person, Beauzée says, 'Il est évident que *tous* les *articles*'—and under this term he includes the pronouns abovementioned—'dont on vient de parler, sont en effet des adjectifs, qui servent à déterminer l'étendue de la signification des noms auquels ils sont joints.' pp. 206—240. Harris says, 'The truth is, the articles *a* and *the* are both of them *definitives*,' under which term he includes all adjectives. DrWallis says of the articles *A*, and *The*, 'Sunt autem revera nomina Adjectiva et eodem plane modo usurpantur quo reliqua adjectiva. His respondent Gallorum articuli *un* et *le*;' that is, 'They are in fact adjective nouns and are manifestly used in the same manner as other adjectives. The corresponding words in

French are the articles *un* and *le*.' p. 79. Dr Crombie says,—'To me the distinctive name of *article* assigned to the word *A*, appears to be useless. Were *emphasis* to be admitted as the principle of classification, and I see no other distinction between *a* and *one*, the parts of speech might be multiplied beyond number.' p. 57. Again, 'The word *The*, I doubt not proceeded from *this* and *that* ..... which may be referred to the class of adjectives. The only difference between *a* and *one*, *the* and *this*, being, that the words called articles always have their noun expressed, while the others admit of its being sometimes understood.' pp. 54 to 69. Rees, p. 15, says, 'The article *A* is in truth the numeral adjective *one*, and the import of it precisely corresponds with its original signification. Hence we may learn with certainty that it is enveloping the word in mystery to call it an article instead of calling it by the more appropriate name of numeral adjective; that the equivalent of the article *a* exists in Greek and Latin, but is rejected as useless in those languages, and its frequent use in English is so far from being necessary, that it is an incumbrance and inelegance,' &c. Again, p. 16—'The article *the* is the same in origin, and often in use, with *that*, and indeed in Anglo-Saxon, *that* is only the neuter

gender of *the*. Mr Tooke has the merit of being the first to show that, in all circumstances, *that* retains one and the same character,' viz. a definitive or adjective. Tracy calls all the French articles adjectives, and says, 'N'oubliez pas que *Le* et *Il* sont la même chose et le même adjectif.' If the French can reject all *their* articles we may well spare ours.

The distinction of definite and indefinite, so much insisted on by Mr Murray, is in my opinion, fallacious. The chief example of Mr Murray, to show the peculiar strength of *the*, is in the inimitable reproof of the prophet Nathan.—'And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man, and he said to Nathan, As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die. And Nathan said unto David, *Thou* art the man.' It is fashionable to assert the superiority of *the* over *this* or *that* in this reply of Nathan, but, I have no ear, or either of these words, admitting as it does of emphasis, is preferable to the unemphatical *the*.—'And Nathan said to David, "*Thou* art *that* man."' *A* is called *indefinite*, although *one* is not a *very* indefinite number. Mr Murray says thou art *a* man is not so strong an expression as thou art *the* man. This can only prove that the defining power of the words is different, for it is not

difficult to find instances where the word *a* has a force which *the* can not reach. Thus Hamlet says of his father, 'He was *a* man, take him for all in all, we shall not look upon his like again.' So in that sublime reply of Rolla to Elvira, who proposes to him to strike down the incorruptible guard, 'That soldier, mark me, is a *man*, all are not *men* that wear the human *form*.'

I do not pretend, as some do, that *this*, *that*, and *one*, may always, without a shade of difference in the meaning, be substituted for *the*, *a*, and *an*, nor, because I call the latter adjectives, do I dismiss them from the language. They are now useful modifications of *one* and *this*, used when one and this are unemphatical, and possessing, as adjectives, all the defining, limiting, and demonstrative power they possessed as articles.

2. The next useless division of the popular grammar dispensed with in the True English Grammar, is the *Pronoun*. Of these it is only necessary to notice what are called the personal pronouns, and the relative *who*, for the popular grammar allows the others to have all the peculiarities of adjectives, and if we defend our position in regard to the more difficult, the others will yield of course. The first inquiry is, 'What is a pronoun?' Mr Murray says, 'A pronoun is a word *used*

instead of a noun to avoid the too frequent repetition of the same word.' Still the question recurs, 'What *is* a pronoun,' not what does it *do?* Is it the *name* of a thing? Even Mr Murray has not ventured to assert this, although he might have saved himself from the suspicion of originality by citing Wallis, Sanctius, Buffier, and others. Beauzée, after alluding to the above opinion of Sanctius and Buffier, says, 'The principal source of the uncertainty of grammarians in regard to pronouns, is the supposition repeated like so many echos, without examination, by all who have treated upon the subject, *that the pronouns represent nouns.* The distinction of noun and pronoun would never have been thought of, if these words in fact expressed beings in the same manner, and presented them under the same aspect, and if it had not been felt, at least confusedly, that there were characteristic differences between the two species. I say *confusedly*, and I add that it was impossible distinctly to assign these characters by pursuing the mistaken route which all grammarians without exception have followed. They have all adopted, upon the faith of each other, a catalogue of pretended pronouns, in which are found, as I shall prove, pronouns, nouns, adjectives, and even adverbs.' Beauzée

only admits the 1st and 2d persons to be pronouns, but his definition of them, p. 172–3, reduces them to mere *adjectives of personality*, an idea which Tracy has since better explained, as I shall show.

Harris says, p. 30, 'That there is indeed a near relation between pronouns and articles (that is, adjectives) the old grammarians have all acknowledged, and some words it has been doubtful to which class to refer.' After citing the opinions of ancient grammarians, who placed many of the pronouns amongst the adjectives, he says of Vossius, who opposed this doctrine, 'Vossius did not enough attend to the ancient writers upon this subject, who considered all words as articles (adjectives) which, being associated with nouns, and not standing in their place, served in any manner to ascertain and determine their signification.' And yet Harris insists upon retaining the *personal* pronouns for the following, which he calls his *principal* reason. 'No noun, properly so called, implies its own presence. It is therefore to ascertain such presence that the pronoun is taken *in aid*.' Again, 'If two strangers meet, how shall the speaker address the other, when he knows not his name, or how explain himself by his own name, of which the other is wholly ignorant? Nouns, as

they have been described, cannot answer the purpose. The first expedient seems to have been pointing, but the authors of language were not content with this; they invented a race of words to supply this pointing, which words, as they always stood for substantives or nouns, were called pronouns.' So, when two strangers meet, and one says to the other, 'Sir, or stranger! what street is this?' the stranger does not know that he is addressed. Again, as the pronouns supply the place of the *pointing* and not of the person pointed at, they can hardly be called pronouns, but answer exactly to Harris's own definition of an article or definitive adjective.

The class of adjectives is very numerous, sufficiently extensive to express all the qualities, conditions, and circumstances in which nouns can be supposed to differ. Thus *good*, *bad*, &c. express quality; *square*, *round*, &c. express form; *high*, *low*, *bond*, *free*, &c. express condition; *near*, *present*, *absent*, *distant*, &c., express situation or place; others, usually derived from verbs, express condition or state of action, as *falling* bodies, *singing* birds, *carping* critics, the person *speaking*, the person *hearing*, &c. and some only express the ordinal or numerical limitation of nouns, as *one*, *two*, *three*, *first*, *second*, *third*. In fact, the subdivisions of ad-

jectives are infinite, but *all* adjectives agree in some very important particulars.

1st. They are all used to distinguish nouns from each other, or to restrict their meaning.

2d. When the noun is known, they can all be used without repeating the noun.

3d. The adjective may, in various ways, designate its noun, whether expressed or not, but it only stands *without* its noun, and not *in its steud or place*, for the place is vacant, and ready to be filled whenever we choose to insert or repeat the noun.

It is very common for us to use acknowledged adjectives without their nouns, when the noun to which they refer cannot be mistaken. Thus, 'The *wise* go right if they go *alone*.' The *poor* are not necessarily *unhappy*. God is *good*,—*good* in creating man, *good* in providing for his happiness, *good* in forgiving his ingratitude. The adjective *good* prevents the repetition both of the noun *God* and the verb *is*, but no one thinks of calling it a *proverbandnoun*. Our theory of pronouns then is, that they are mere adjectives, having peculiarities, to be sure, but always having, like other adjectives, a noun which they designate or distinguish, and without which they would have no complete use. The *pronouns* are adjectives which have been selected chiefly to distin-

guish *persons* from each other, and not *things*. *I* is used to designate a person present and speaking; *thou* to designate a person present, or hearing, or spoken to; *he* and *she* designate the person referred to, either present or absent. Now, as the persons speaking and addressed know each other by the adjectives *I* and *thou*, the name of the person is generally omitted. But there is less certainty in regard to *he* and *she*, which are never used until the name has first been pronounced, or the person pointed at with the finger, the eye, &c. But this distinguishing power of *I* and *thou* is confined to actual conversation, for in books more caution is necessary, and every '*I think*' must be carefully followed by '*said John*' or said somebody else.

The difference then between the theory of pronouns, which I have adopted, and that most prevalent, is, that I consider these words as adjectives, designating certain nouns, which in all doubtful cases are expressed and repeated. I do not rob them of any lawful prerogative. If they point out the person speaking or addressed, they may, for ought I care, be said to denote the first and second persons, and my grammar allows this harmless distinction; but it does not allow them to be mistaken for the first and second persons

themselves, which are always at hand and will not give their dignity to a menial.

Who, is an adjective of the same description, and its place, like that of *I*, *thou*, *he*, &c. may be supplied by other adjectives. Thus, instead of the child *who* cries, we may say the child *that* cries, or *which* cries. *Who* is now generally applied to persons, although it once shared this dignity with *which*. The latter still retains its office when employed in asking questions, *Which did it?* being as common as *who did it*—and the possessive *whose* is as often applied to irrational animals and things as to persons, so that what was right in the days of Swift, is right now, and we may say with him, 'A true critic is like a dog at a feast, *whose* thoughts and stomach are wholly set upon what the worthy guests throw away.'

I shall now cite a few authorities to show that I am entitled to no credit for any originality in my theory of pronouns.

The writer in Rees' Cyclopedia says, 'The pronouns *I* and *thou* were originally the adjectives *one* and *two*.' After giving his reasons for this probable opinion, he adds, that 'these pronouns still retain their origin in their names, *I* being the first person, and *thou*, the second, not in dignity, but in original meaning.'

Again, he says, '*I* and *thou* are *not*, as has been supposed, substitutes for the names of the speaker and the person addressed, to avoid their too frequent repetition.' Again, after showing that the origin of *I* and *thou* must be traced through Latin and Greek to Hebrew, he says, 'In Hebrew, Arabic, and Persian, the personal pronouns are converted into adjectives by being annexed to nouns.' Again, 'There is, properly speaking, no such thing as a third person; *he*, *she*, *it*, *they*, with their correspondent words in Latin and Greek, being a species of restrictive or definitive adjectives, agreeing with the defined noun expressed or implied.' pp. 13, 14.

Gilchrist, in his Etymological Interpreter, says, 'A pronoun, we are told, is a word used instead of a noun, &c. This is one proof amongst a thousand, how unwilling grammarians have been to trouble their understandings in the way of their profession, for both the name and the definition are destitute of foundation.' Again, 'The noun to which the pronoun belongs can be, and often *is* omitted, just as sentences may be rendered elliptic in many other respects, and their meaning be preserved; but it does not follow that the words called pronouns, stand *instead* of nouns, any more than it can be truly said, that those words which remain in any elliptic or abridg-

ed sentence stand instead of the words omitted.' Again, 'The sole use of pronouns is to direct the attention to some object or noun expressed or understood;' and finally, he concludes, 'Thus, what are called personal pronouns, relative pronouns, demonstrative pronouns, definite article, &c. all serve one and the same purpose. They *point* to some object or some noun, and therefore they cannot *stand* in its stead.' pp. 110, 112.

The able authors of 'Systematic Education,' say of the words in question, 'These words, with their plurals, are called pronouns, and though they obviously either come under other sorts of words, or are abbreviations for one or more of them, yet they are so distinct and important in their use as to require a separate class.' p. 66.

Beauzée says, in concluding his remarks upon pronouns, 'This apparently minute detail in regard to the pretended pronouns of our language, has not for its object the French grammar only. I have had an eye upon general grammar and every language, for in almost all of them the words corresponding to those I have been examining, are regarded as pronouns. It is easy to apply the same remarks to them all, and this application is so much the more necessary as we are not to expect clearness in any method

of instruction except so far as every thing is seen in its proper place.' p. 181. See also pp. 222, and 229, and 238, in regard to the impropriety of calling some pronouns *relative*, and not allowing the same denomination to all.

Tracy says, '*Who* is one of those words, which many grammarians call pronouns, because the noun to which they relate is generally understood, and they appear to occupy its place; whilst we have left *them*, as Beauzée did, in the class of adjectives, because they really have not the force of a noun, and do not occupy its place, but only refer to it, merely modifying the noun which is sometimes expressed, but oftener understood. vol. i, p. 142.

I must be indulged with one extract more from this admirable philosopher, because it contains the most complete statement of my opinions that I have to offer.

'It might be maintained with advantage, that such words are neither nouns, nor like nouns; that their office being to add to the true names of ideas a determinateness which they lack, that of their relation to the act of speech, they perform the part of modifiers—that they are adjectives of person as others are of quality or quantity; that, in fact, usage authorizes us most commonly to leave the substantive understood, when we employ ad-

jectives of the first and second person, and on the contrary to leave the personal adjective understood when we speak of the third person—but that, in all cases, both are supplied by the thought, and both necessary to the complete expression of it; and thus the personal pronouns are true adjectives.' vol. i, p. 77. See also Diversions of Purley, vol. i. p. 190.

INTERJECTIONS.

Of the Interjection little need be said, for even the more intelligent friends of the popular system give it up. They do not pretend to any other interjections than Oh, ah, and ha, ha, ha! of which even Mr Murray says 'It is unnecessary in a cultivated tongue to expatiate on such expressions of passion as are scarcely worthy of being ranked among the branches of artificial language.' Such words as *hark*, *lo*, *alas*, *adieu*, *farewell*, &c. are degraded when classed, as they sometimes are, with interjections. Cardell says, p. 184, 'Fruitless attempts have been made to arrange this set of words into different subdivisions, according to their meanings, but all words capable of being so classed do not belong to interjections.' Harris, p. 97, says 'If not adverbs, what then are they? It may be

answered, not so properly parts of speech, as *adventitious sounds ;* certain voices of nature, rather than voices of art.' The writer in 'Systematic Education, says, '*O* or *ah*, and they are used for each other, is the only interjection that has the least claim to be considered a word.' Dr Crombie says, 'The Interjection is clearly not a necessary part of speech, these physical emissions of sound having no more claim to be called parts of speech than the neighing of a horse or the lowing of a cow.' Horne Tooke thinks that all true interjections are not words, but belong to that language which is common to all animals.' Gilchrist says, 'Interjections are only those sounds used before language was formed.' So says the learned writer of 'Grammar,' in Rees' Cyclopedia. p. 2 of the article.

ADVERBS.

Harris, page 68, calls Adverbs attributives (that is Adjectives) of the second order or attributes of attributives. After naming some of the classes into which Adverbs are divided, he says, 'Nearly all the remaining adverbs, and not a few that I have named, are either periphrases, or prepositions, or adverbial adjectives.'

Mr Tooke calls the adverb 'the common

sink and repository of all heterogeneous, unknown corruptions.' vol. i, p. 288. The whole object of the first volume of Mr Tooke's work is to show that the words, which constitute the four last classes of Mr Murray, are mistaken, and really belong to the other classes of words. He must therefore be considered as entirely on my side, and that his opinion is entitled to some respect may be seen in the extracts I shall make from other authors.

Gilchrist, says, (Etymol. Interp. p. 105,) after giving Mr Murray's definition of an adverb, 'If any species of ignorance be more contemptible than another, it is that which is ostentatious of the appearance of learning, and which affects the forms of science. Better surely have no names than have such as mean nothing, better have no distinctions than such as are absurd.' Again, p. 106, 'All these five parts of speech, Article, Adverb, Preposition, Conjunction, Interjection, are more worthy of being discarded than explained.' Dr Crombie says, p. 213, 'On inquiring into the meaning and etymology of Adverbs, it will appear that most of them are abbreviations or contractions of two or more words. Mr Tooke has proved, indeed, as I conceive incontrovertibly, that most of them are either corruptions of other words

or abbbreviatious of phrases or of sentences: one thing is certain, that the adverb is not an indispensable part of speech.' The authors of Systematic Education say, 'On the origin of most of those abverbs, less obviously formed from other sorts of verbs, Horne Tooke has thrown great light.' Dr Rees says, 'Adverbs are corruptions from nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and verbs.' vol. vii, p. 1.

PREPOSITIONS.

Tooke says, had it been possible to define a preposition all men would have agreed as to the number of them, but in every language all differ as to this point.

Gilchrist says there are no prepositions but what are properly prefixes, but this fact was, in process of time, lost sight of, and other words besides *prefixes* were classed under the same designation, and then this unmeaning doctrine was communicated, that 'Prepositions serve to connect words with one another, and to show the relation between them.'

Dr Crombie says, 'That most of our prepositions form no distinct species of words, Mr Tooke has produced incontrovertible evidence, nor is it to be doubted that a perfect acquaintance with the northern languages would convince us that all of them are corrup-

tions or combinations of other words.' p. 213.

Tracy, after noticing in the ancient languages the transmutation of other words into what are called prepositions, says, 'Our modern languages, which are heterogeneous, render it more difficult to discover the etymologies and derivations; and yet the truly philosophical grammarian, Horne Tooke, has succeeded in tracing the origin of nearly all the prepositions of the English language, and in proving that they always come from nouns or old adjectives. Such researches completed, and extended to all languages, would doubtless be very useful in many respects, and would prove by facts what I have just theoretically established while tracing the Origin of Ideas. vol. i, p. 117.

CONJUNCTIONS.

Harris says, p. 88, that all adverbs expressive of time or place 'may be properly called adverbial conjunctions, because they conjoin sentences and denote the attributes either of time or place. And hence they appear like zoophytes in nature, a kind of middle beings of amphibious character, which by sharing the attributes of the higher and lower, conduce to link the whole together.' The stoics called prepositions prepositive-conjunctions. Wallis says, p. 124, 'Yet if

any one prefers to call any of these conjunctions adverbs, or to call some adverbs conjunctions, it is so unimportant as not to be worth contending for, as in Latin the same word is at different times an adverb and conjunction. Nor should we suffer any great injury if all the adverbs, conjunctions, and interjections were reduced to the same class, for there is little or no difference between them.' These are the opinions of philologists before the true theory was discovered by Tooke, and their perplexities perhaps led Tooke to seek out the cause. Mr Tooke's theory will be understood by our extracts from later philologists.

Dr Crombie says, 'I decidedly adopt the Theory of Mr Tooke, which considers conjunctions as no distinct class of words, but as adjectives or abbreviations of two or more significant words.' p. 224.

Gilchrist, after using Mr Murray's definition, says, many words commonly called *conjunctions*, have as little claim to that designation as to any other which could be applied. p. 105.

The Systematic Education says, 'The precise nature of the words usually called conjunctions and prepositions, was very little known, and not generally even suspected, till the publication of the Diversions of Pur-

ley, since that time, though philologists do not seem willing to admit, in all cases, the correctness of Mr Tooke's *derivations*, yet *his general principle* is, we suppose, universally considered as completely established. The distinction between prepositions and conjunctions we consider as merely technical. The *general principle* before referred to, is, that all those words which are usually termed conjunctions or prepositions, are the abbreviations or corruptions of nouns or verbs, and are still employed in *a sense directly referable to that which they bore when in the acknowledged forms of nouns or verbs.* Vol. i. p. 94.

Such is our exposition of the words which grammarians, who have only surveyed the surface of our language, call articles, pronouns, adverbs, prepositions, conjunctions, and interjections. We do not, as some have stupidly or wickedly asserted, dismiss these words from the language, and thus return to the rudest state of language, to the 'woods of Germany.' We preserve them *all*, we *use* them all as they are *commonly* used, saving the greater caution which a better knowledge of their true nature and character induces. With us the name of a thing is a noun, our verbs are those commonly called so; our adjectives embrace all those usually called so, with all possessive cases of nouns (for

these are not *names* of things) all pronouns, participles, and articles. And under these three divisions we find it *easy* to arrange all the *denominations* of modern grammar which we reject.

We are aware that it is sometimes more difficult to manage with few divisions, than with a larger number; but this is only the case when the additional divisions are really distinct and evident, which is not the case with the classes we reject. Their own inventors allow that some prepositions are also conjunctions, adverbs, and adjectives. They confess that nearly all their interjections are verbs; their *conjunctions* both *join* and *separate;* their *ad-verbs* qualify almost every other part of speech. In short, either definition, that of the adverb, preposition, or conjunction, will apply equally well to all three.* We

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* Let us amuse ourselves with an experiment. Mr Murray says,—

'An adverb is a part of speech joined to a verb, an adjective, and sometimes to another adverb, to express some quality or circumstance respecting it,' as

He reads *correctly*——*correctly* expresses *some* circumstance of the verb reads, viz. *its quality.*

He reads *to* me——*to* expresses a circumstance of reads, viz. *its direction.*

He reads *as* I do——*as* expresses a circumstance of reads, viz. its resemblance to my reading.

'Prepositions,

contend therefore that incorrect distinctions are worse than none, for instead of assisting in the clear arrangement of our ideas, they are a source of confusion and error, and if any possible good can result from them, they should take shelter under the more humble appellation of subdivisions, exceptions, &c. Again, it may be thought a convenience to

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'Prepositions, serve to connect words with one another and to show the relation between them.'

He wished *for* a coach. It is not my business to say whether *for* connects *he* or *wished* with *coach*, but we are inclined to think the connexion and relation would be as apparent if the word *for* were entirely omitted.

He wished *but* a coach. *But* connects words as much as *for* does, and it shows the relation between wished and the object of the wish, viz. the relaton of *restriction*.

He wished *then* a coach. *Then* connects *of course*, though it may be left out as *for* may, and it shows the relation of *time* between the wish and the thing wished.

'A Conjunction is a part of speech that is chiefly used to connect sentences; it sometimes connects only words.'

Two *and* three are five. *And* connects two and three.
Two *with* three are five. *With* connects the same words,
Two *more* three are five. that is, $2+3=5$.

But enough of this, the definitions are all wrong, and I should ask pardon for this attempt to expose what is so manifestly absurd.

have the classes of pronouns and articles, but, if they are truly adjectives, there is no more propriety in calling them another part of speech, than there would be in a shepherd's saying he had four kinds of animals in his flock, viz. white sheep, black sheep, good sheep, and bad sheep. Sheep are sheep after all, and if there is a shade of difference between them, let them be subdivided, but not called goats, for without the diploma of a beard they can never pass for the wiser animal.

But the 'True English Grammar' has other peculiarities than the mere *division* of words. Our nouns have no distinction of proper and common, our possessive case is an adjective, our nominative is the agent, and our objective case is the object. Our verbs have no moods or voices, are all *active*, and have only two tenses. Our participles are adjectives, and our auxiliaries are principal verbs. A mere sketch of the reasons for these alterations woutd require a larger volume than I intend to make of this, and therefore, as the reasons are given at some length in the grammar, to which the candid reader is respectfully referred, I shall only adduce a few authorities for each change, to show that I have not ventured to follow reason without the precaution of obtaining a sanction for doing so from the best authority.

1. We reject the distinction of proper and common nouns because those who adopt it, 'say proper nouns are sometimes common, and common nouns are sometimes proper.'*

2. We reject the term *case* because what is called case in other languages has nothing corresponding to it in ours. We use the simple term *agent* for a noun that acts, and *object* for the object of action. The possessive not being the name of any thing, and merely distinguishing one noun from another as adjectives do, we class with adjectives.

Dr Wallis says, 'English nouns are not changed by case or gender, so that much of the irksomeness found in other languages, especially the Greek and Latin, is avoided,' p. 76,—and again, 'There are two kinds of adjectives derived directly from nouns, which are always placed before them, and supply the place of almost all the prepositions. The first, which may be called the Possessive adjective, is formed from every

* Mr Murray and his followers seem to have overlooked the fact that *every* noun is as much a proper noun as those they call so, when it is used to distinguish one person or thing from another. The king is as much a *proper*, that is, a *peculiar* denomination, as if we called him, George at once. So *the author* is as much my proper denomination now, as my baptismal name would be, and because there are other *authors* this is not the less true, for there are also other Williams.

noun by adding *s* or *es* to it, as man's nature, Virgil's poem.* The other kind of adjective is no other than a noun placed adjectively, and not unfrequently joined to the following noun as if to form a compound word, as sea voyage, Turkey voyage, &c., p. 89, 92. Beauzée says, p. 487, 'It must be observed that several languages have not allowed cases to their nouns and adjectives, but they have all admitted some for pronouns. Thus the Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, English, French, &c., which have not given any cases to their nouns or adjectives, have given more or less to their pronouns.' He only gives our pronouns two cases, however.

Dr Rees denies the common definition of case, declares the primary and essential idea of case to be *position*, and accuses Dr Lowth and Lindley Murray of confounding the subject. He also describes the creation of adjectives from verbs and nouns, by juxtaposition, as in the words *eye ball*, or by the affixing of some termination, such as *ish* or *like* (which we contract into *ly*) to mark resem-

* The separation of the possessive *s* to distinguish it from the plural, was common when Dr Wallis wrote his grammar, but it was done in the belief that the *s* was a contraction of *his*, which opinion Dr Wallis completely refutes, pp. 91, 92. See the True English Grammar for other details on this subject.

blance, and *is* or *'s* to denote source or possession, &c.

Dr Crombie says 'It may be asked what is the difference between *caput hominis*, a man's head and *caput humanum* a human head. If *hominis*, *man's*, be deemed a noun, why should not *humanum*, *human*, be deemed a noun also? It may be answered that *hominis does* in fact perform the office of an adjective.' He then asserts that 'Dr Wallis, one of our first and best grammarians, assigns to the English Genitive or Possessive the name of Adjective.' He then quotes Mr Tooke's theory of terminations, and adds, 'If the doctrine, therefore, of the learned author be correct, neither *hominis*, *man's*, nor *humanum*, *human*, can with consistency be called nouns.

Again, he says, 'If we confine the term noun to the simple *name* of the subject, we shall exclude the posessive singular from all right to this appellation. This is indeed an inconsistency, which can in no way be removed, unless by adopting the opinion of Wallis, who assigns no cases to English nouns, and considers man's, king's, &c. adjectives.' p. 95.

Some grammarians allow only one case in English, and some claim *six*, because by the aid of prepositions we can express the six cases of the Latin language, and they con-

tend that they have a right to do this as well as to say we have six or more tenses, because we can somehow or other express the Latin tenses. Horne Tooke and Mr Gilchrist reject altogether the idea of *case* in English nouns. So Cardell, p. 54.

3. Harris says, p. 62, 'All verbs, that are strictly so called, denote energies,' and then adds in a note, 'We use this word *energy* rather than motion, from its more comprehensive meaning, it being a sort of genus which includes within it both motion and its privation.' After describing active and passive verbs, which are allowed by all to express action, and to have objects, he adds, 'In some verbs it happens that the energy always keeps within the energizer, and never passes out to any foreign, extraneous subject, as Cæsar walketh, Cæsar sitteth. This forms that species of verbs which grammarians have thought fit to call verbs *neuter*, as if, indeed, they were void both of action and passion, when, perhaps, they may be rather said to imply both. Not, however, to dispute about names, as these neuters in their energizer *always discover their passive subject*, which other verbs cannot, their passive subjects being infinite, &c.' p. 64. From this description Harris does not except the verb *to be*. Cardell says 'Persons of

candor and talent who will give themselves the trouble to examine the principles alluded to in the preceding pages, will see, at once, how much the business of learning and teaching is simplified by adopting the self proving fact that all verbs are necessarily active, and transitive, the verb *to be* among the rest, for which another transitive verb may always be substituted, without altering the grammatical construction. Essay on Language, p. 162.

Beauzée says, p. 264, 'It is a fault in modern grammarians to call *neuter* such verbs as are neither active nor passive, and such as are active but intransitive. By not taking proper care, they have also classed under the same head verbs which are truly passive, as to fall, suffer, die, &c. The peculiarity of requiring or not requiring a complement (object) to complete the sense can never serve as a foundation for the distinction of active, passive, and neuter.' After dividing verbs into absolute and relative, the former having the sense complete in themselves, and the latter requiring a complement, he refers the subject to syntax, saying, 'It is sufficient to have alluded to it here, to exhibit the confused notions of grammarians, which confusion has deceived even Sanctius himself.'

Dr Rees on the subject of verbs, says, 'We now proceed to consider the usual

division of verbs into active, passive, and neuter; and this division of verbs we pronounce to be extremely unphilosophical. As the expression of *active* qualities is essential to verbs, there is no such thing as a *neuter* verb. There are, indeed, verbs that denote *rest* or the cessation of motion, but we cannot use even these without connecting with them positive ideas, and as action is necessary to destroy or support action, we can resolve all apparently neuter into active verbs. After giving examples to illustrate this position, he says, 'The division of verbs into active and passive, though convenient in some languages, is incorrect and even absurd in our own tongue, for all active verbs imply passion, and all passive verbs imply action, &c.' p. 21. Art. Gram.

Tracy, pp. 226, 86, and 84, denies the propriety of these distinctions, and says of the passive voice, '*Comme il est ridicule*'!

4. Dr Rees observes, p. 21, 'Mr Tooke says that mood, tense, number, and person are no parts of the verb; and we acknowledge the assertion to be just in *English*, where the verb is known only by the annexed pronoun, or its connexion with the agent and object.' Speaking of the subjunctive mood, Dr Rees says, 'It has a close affinity to the *infinitive*, which, as we have already observ-

ed, is only an abstract noun, with the preposition *to* denoting the end or object to which the (action expressed by the) preceding verb is directed;' 'of course,' he continues, 'these moods may be substituted for each other,' &c. See also p. 19.—On p. 20, he says, 'That the infinitive has the nature of an abstract noun is manifest from this—in *all* languages it may be made the subject or object of discourse, and in Greek it admits of the article before it, as nouns do, and in all instances whatever, an abstract noun may be substituted for it.'

Beauzée, p. 580, says, 'It may be said that this mode is a verbal-noun since it is the essence of a noun and verb united.' Alluding to the error of another grammarian, he says, p. 581, 'But this error must yield before the principles just laid down as to the nature of the infinitive; it is a noun, and consequently may be itself the subject of another verb, &c.' And again, p. 582, 'This principle (that the infinitive never in any language refers to a subject or nominative) is confirmed by all I have just said to prove that this mode is a true noun, a noun which, in all languages, is employed as the subject of a verb, as the complement of a preposition, or, if you please, of another verb; a noun, in fine, which is of the neuter

gender in Greek and Latin, and with which the adjective agrees in every idiom where the adjective has received inflexions corresponding to those of the noun to which it is applied.'

Harris says, in a note, p. 54, 'The Greek language expresses its several modes, and all distinctions of time likewise, by an adequate number of variations in each particular verb. The Latin admits in like manner a large portion of those variations. The modern languages, which have still fewer of those variations, have been necessitated, all of them, to assume two auxiliars at least. As to the English tongue, *it is so poor in this respect, as to admit no variation for modes, and only one for time.*' Again, p. 59, he says, 'Through all the above modes, with their respective tenses, the verb being considered as denoting an attribute, has always reference to some person or substance. But there is a mode or form under which verbs sometimes appear, where they have no reference at all to persons or substances. These *infinitives* go further; they not only lay aside the character of attributives but they also assume that of substantives, and as such themselves become distinguished with their several attributives.' And then, in a note on this paasage, he adds, 'It is from the

infinitive's thus participating the nature of a noun, that the best grammarians have called it sometimes a *verbal noun*, and sometimes *the verb's noun*. When we say, I choose to philosophize rather than to be rich, the infinitives are in nature as much accusatives as if we were to say, I choose philosophy rather than riches.' It will be remarked that this is a rule of *general grammar*.

The necessity of rendering our participial nouns by the French infinitive, and their custom of governing the infinitive by various prepositions, whilst we confine ourselves to one, must be familiar to every scholar.

Even Dr Lowth says of the infinitive, 'If the essence of the verb be made to consist in affirmation, not only the participle but the infinitive itself, will be excluded from its place in the verb.' Again, he says, 'as far as grammar is concerned, there are no more moods in any language than there are forms of the verb appropriated to the denoting of such different manners of representation.' pp. 47, 48. Murray also apologizes for introducing so many moods and tenses, but defends his conduct on the ground of convenience, utility, resemblance to the Latin, beautiful symmetry, &c., not recollecting that the beautiful symmetry of a certain elevated tower in old times led to the most complete confusion of language.

Tracy says, '*L' infinitif n'est, pour ainsi dire, pas un mode du verbe; c'est un vrai substantif. C'est le nom par lequel on désigne et le verbe lui même et l'état qu'il exprime.*'

Dr Crombie I have not named, for I have adopted his opinions on this point exactly. He calls the infinitive a noun, has no mood, and only two tenses, the present and the past. A large portion of his able grammar is occupied in examining the opinions of others on the subject of moods and tenses, and to his grammar I must refer, if the authorities adduced are insufficient.

Beauzée says, p. 314, 'If we confine ourselves to the common nomenclature, to the received list and order of tenses, ours is not the only language that may be reproached as anomalous. They are all in this condition, and it is even difficult to assign the tenses which correspond to each other in the different languages, or to determine precisely the true sense of each tense in any single language.' The system of Beauzée, which contradicts all the prevailing notions on this subject, has failed, as all systems must, which suppose the idea of any precise time to be expressed by any form of the verb.

Harris, p. 38, says, 'Should it be asked whether time itself may not become upon

occasion the verb's principal signification, it is answered—No. And this appears, because the same time may be denoted by different verbs, and different times by the same verb, neither of which could happen, were time any thing more than a mere concomitant.' Harris allowed but three tenses—present, past, and future—but these he greatly subdivided.

Wallis says, p. 102, The conjugation of verbs, whence arises so much difficulty in other languages, is a small affair in English. We have only two tenses, the present and preterite-imperfect, and two participles, which are evidently adjectives, and have in every respect the nature of other adjectives. And again, p. 105, 'To verbs in the infinitive, omitting the particle *to*, the auxiliary verbs shall, will, may, can, &c. are prefixed.' In such cases I call the infinitive the object of shall, will, &c., and the potential mood, and some of the tenses of the popular grammar are destroyed of course. I have already cited his preface where Dr Wallis censures his few predecessors for violating the simplicity of the English language, by the introduction of moods and tenses foreign to the English idiom.

As it regards the rejection of all the tenses but two, I have already cited the general

opinion of Dr Rees. After accounting (p. 21) for the present and past tenses, he says, 'In modern languages, which have no distinguishing terminations, the notification of *future* time is but an inference drawn from verbs of volition or desire, in consequence of the constant association of volition or desire with time to come, as *I will learn*, which means *I am resolved to learn*.' He then adds 'It is of importance to remark that though *shall*, *will*, with *do*, *may*, *have*, &c. are called auxiliaries, they are still leading verbs, and *govern* those, which they are supposed to subserve, in the infinitive mood.' p. 22.

Dr Beattie says, 'Some will not allow any thing to be a tense, but what, in one inflected word, expresses an affirmation with time, for those parts of the verb are not properly called tenses which assume that appearance by means of auxiliary verbs. At this rate, in English, we should have *two tenses* only, the present and the past in the active verb, and, in the passive, no tenses at all.'

The observing Tracy says, 'There is in Latin a *future* participle, but there is none in modern languages. This is the reason why they have no future in the infinitive, and their future indicative is a simple tense or a tense incorrectly composed of two present tenses, as we see in German and English.' p. 195.

And alluding to this, p. 206, he says, 'This is not a legitimate analogy and in estimating the power of a tense, great care should be taken not to confound the signification peculiar to any of the words which compose it. Alluding to our *second* future tense, he calls it '*La vicieuse composition des futurs allemands et anglais.*' p. 207, and more particularly p. 226.

Dr Lowth only allows three tenses, and no passive voice or potential mode. Tooke and Gilchrist allow no *time* to be expressed by the verb, and the latter only tolerates the past tense, as a very general *form* of the verb, but expressing no time of itself.

5. Finally, in regard to Participles, *all the authorities* I have quoted agree essentially in calling them adjectives or nouns, and in denying that they are any part of the verb; and, as Mr Murray himself says 'they have either the nature of nouns or adjectives,' it would be wasting time to cite any particular authorities.

Here I must rest my case. In my quotations I am not aware that in the least respect I have misrepresented the opinions of any writer. I know that in no case have I adduced one half of the proofs which are at my command. But the subject of Grammar is uninteresting to most minds, and a large book might defeat

the object I have in view. I cannot but think there are enterprising teachers, and even high-minded critics, who will thank me for thus condensing opinions, which it would have cost them some trouble to collate ; and I have a faint hope that, armed with such authorities, some may be induced to aid me in the cause I have undertaken. Perhaps, even the distinguished journal which has incautiously lent its aid to an ungenerous attempt to calumniate and injure me, may acknowledge, that if all who suspect the correctness of the prevalent system of grammar are fools, there is a goodly company of us. The scholar will excuse me for giving only a translation of such foreign grammarians as I have cited, because had I given only the French or Latin many would not have understood, and had I given both the original and translation the size of the book would have been too great. I have prefered to give only the translation, with a reference to the original. Should any doubt the possibility of teaching such a corrected system to children, even if it be allowed to be the true one, it may be said, that it is always easier to teach truth than error. If it be asked what utility will arise from adopting the new system, I answer, it will not only subserve the cause of truth, but make the study of grammar an intellectual and not a mechanical

exercise. If any one doubts this, I can refer him with confidence to my own experience. The pupils, to whom I have taught the system, have not only learned faster and easier than is usual on the old plan, but have taken great pleasure in the study. Nor has the study of this system been any obstacle to their progress in French and Latin. I do not find that those who come to the study of these languages without any notions of numerous moods and tenses, are less advanced or receive this knowledge with more difficulty than those who have been drilled in the dissimilar notions of Mr Murray ; for it must be allowed, that, so far as names, resemblance, and use are concerned, there is little or no correspondence between the moods and tenses of Mr Murray, and those of foreign grammarians. Above all, I wish it to be understood, that I by no means think the system I have endeavoured to form, by uniting the opinions of a majority of grammarians, insusceptible of improvement. I wish the task had fallen into abler hands, and I still hope that justice will be done to it. Its not having been done long ago is a proof of its difficulty, and perhaps this should have deterred me from rushing in where wise men dare not tread. But while I cannot boast of any literary distinction, I may be allowed to place some value upon seven years'

experience in teaching, in teaching rationally, in teaching fearlessly and faithfully, whatever seemed consistent with sound judgment, and best suited to develope and invigorate the youthful mind. In writing 'The True English Grammar,' I did not name my authorities, because I pay no deference to any name myself, except so far as it endorses truth and reason; and I preferred to rest the system I advocated upon its own merits, explained as well as the compass of a small book, and the interrupted manner in which my arduous regular duties require me to despatch extraordinary tasks, would admit. My first object in completing the book was the improvement of my own pupils and this object has been fully accomplished. If an unprejudiced public discern enough of reason and propriety in my plan, to induce them to adopt it, and discard the nonsense now taught for English grammar, I shall certainly be gratified; but whether they do so or not, I trust that I shall not be required to go back to the system I adopted from education, until that which I adopted from examination and conviction has been proved false. That the learned philologists to whose works I owe all my illumination, have not succeeded in reforming the popular defective system, is to me no subject of discouragement, for our labours are very different. They only demolished the received system without

presenting another in such a form as could be generally used and understood ; and each had some notions of his own which were at least of doubtful character ; whereas I have only selected such principles as appear to be adopted by the majority of sound philologists, have added nothing to them, and have presented them in such a practical form as will enable any unprejudiced person to apply them to his ordinary use.

But, say some, Shall we dispense with the perfect *syntax* of Mr Murray, and abandon all the rules for the composition of sentences which he has laid down in such an unequalled manner? To this question, which has great weight in some minds, I answer, first, that many of those rules, with slight variations, apply to our grammar. Second, that some of them are unnecessary, since *several* of his parts of speech are included in *one* of ours. Third, that many of his rules are bare statements of circumstances which do not assist us in the *use* of language. Fourth, that they all lack a reason for their requirements, and many are founded in error.

But how inconsistent is it for a community to insist upon rules of this unpractical nature in the science of grammar, when, in the more important science of arithmetic, they have, by their public agents, and with the

sanction and encouragement of all the reviewers adopted a system which professedly abolishes or discards all rules but those of common sense, and depends upon the proper *understanding* of figures, as we do upon the right understanding of words, for their correct use. That this is a fact we refer to votes on the records of the school committee of Boston, requiring Colburn's books to be used in all the public schools. Yea, even the *golden* rule has been unceremoniously thrown into the lumber house of discarded errors, and although old prejudices winced, our children improved, and nothing is so popular as the system which has done as much to arithmetic, as I have proposed to do to grammar.

But, to contrast the benefit of the two systems, mine and Mr Murray's, I have thought it would be useful to parse a few sentences on both plans. For this purpose I have selected the first paragraph of Milton's monody for Lycidas,* which is as well calculated to try the peculiarities of each system as any passage that I can readily find. It certainly abounds with more difficulties than any friend of the new system will find in the same compass again.

* American First Class Book, p. 353.

Yet once more, O ye laurels, and once more
Ye myrtles brown, with ivy never sere,
I come to pluck your berries harsh and crude,
And, with forced fingers rude,
Shatter your leaves before the mellowing year.

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
Yet	A *disjunctive* conjunction.	A verb meaning *add* or *get.*
once	An adverb of number.	An adjective, originally spelled one's, and qualifying the word *time*, understood.
more.	An adverb of quantity.	An adjective of the second degree of comparison, qualifying *time*, understood.
O	An interjection.	A natural sound of pleasure, pain, surprise, &c. but not a word.
ye	A personal pronoun, *standing instead of the noun laurels*, (which stands in its own stead or place!) second person, nominative case independent.	*Ye* is an adjective indicating the second person, and qualifying *laurels.*
laurels	A noun, nominative case, and put in *apposition* with *ye*, the word that stands instead of it!	A noun addressed, neither the agent nor object of any verb.
and	A copulative conjunction.	A verb, meaning *add*, and in this case capable of changing places with *yet.*
once	As before.	The same as before.

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
more	As before.	
ye myrtles	Like *ye laurels.*	
brown	Adjective qualifying myrtles.	The same.
with	A preposition.	A verb, derived from two sources, *withan* Ang. Saxon, *to join*, and *wyrthan, to be.* In this case, it means join or add, as *yet* and *and* do.
ivy	A noun, objective case, and governed by *with.*	A noun, addressed and parsed as *myrtles* and *laurels* were.
never	An adverb, qualifying *sere.*	A contraction of *no* and *ever*, which means *time* or *duration. No* is an adjective, qualifying *ever*, and *ever* is a noun of time, which, like nouns of measure, weight, distance, &c. are sometimes neither the agent nor object of any verb.
sere	An adjective qualifying ivy.	The same.
I	A personal pronoun, first person, nominative case to *come.*	An adjective indicating the first person, or person speaking, and qualifying *Milton.*
come	Irregular neuter verb, agreeing with I in the first person singular, present tense.	An irregular *active* verb, agreeing with the noun indicated by *I*, viz. Milton.
to pluck	A regular active verb, infinitive	*To* is a noun, meaning *end* or *object*, and used

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
	mood, and governed by *come.*	to convey the action of *come* to its object, *pluck.* *Pluck*, a verbal name or noun, and the object pointed out by *to.*
your	A *possessive adjective pronoun*, joined to *berries.*	An adjective of the second person, referring back to laurels, myrtles, and ivy, the things addressed, and qualifying *berries.*
berries	Noun, objective case, governed by *to pluck.*	Noun, *object* of *pluck.*
harsh, crude	Adjectives qualifying *berries.*	Same.
and	Copulative conjunction.	Verb, meaning *add*, I, or thou, being understood, as in the case of *yet*, *and*, and *with*, above. It here only joins epithet to epithet.
and	A copulative conjunction.	A verb, connecting *pluck* and *shatter*, two names of action.
with	A preposition.	A verb, meaning join or be. One of its chief uses is as in the present case to connect an action, with the agent, instrument, way or means by which the action is performed.
forced	A participle, that, having lost its *time*, has be-	An adjective, formed from the verb *force*, and qualifying *fingers.*

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
	come a mere adjective, qualifying *fingers*.	
fingers	A noun, objective case, and governed by the preposition *with*.	A noun, the instrument of the action *shatter*, and, if you please, the object of the verb *with*.
rude	Adjective qualifying fingers.	The same.
shatter	A regular active verb, in the infinite mood, and connected by *and* to *pluck*.	A verbal name or noun, and with *pluck* the object of the verb *come*.
your	As before, the noun being changed.	
leaves	Noun, objective case, and governed by *shatter*.	Noun, object of *shatter*.
before	A preposition.	An adjective, qualifying *leaves;* or a compound of *be* or *by*, and *fore*. *Fore* is seldom found now, except in compound words, as *fore-arm*, *fore-mast*, *fore-ever*, or, as this is unluckily contracted, *forever*. *Fore* is compared thus, *fore*, *former*, (that is, *more fore*) and *foremost*, (that is, *most fore*.) *Fore* qualifies the noun *year*, and means *future*, if the compound be separated into its simple words.

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
the	The definite article, limiting the signification of *year.*	An adjective, qualifying *year.*
mellowing	A present participle of the regular verb *mellow*, used as an adjective, and qualifying *year.*	A verbal adjective, qualifying year.
year.	A noun, objective case, and governed by *before.*	A noun, the agent of *be* in the compound *before.* Or, if *before* be called an adjective, *year* is the remote object of the verbal noun *shatter.*

Bitter constraint and sad occasion dear,
Compels me to disturb your season due:
For Lycidas is dead—dead ere his prime;—
Young Lycidas, and hath not left his peer.

Compels	A regular active verb, which should be plural, to agree with its nominatives *constraint* and *occasion*, by rule 2.	A regular active verb whose agent is *either* constraint or occasion. The plural *compel* is preferable, or at least, more common, in modern writers.
me	A personal pronoun, first person, objective case, and governed by compels.	An adjective of the first person, indicating Milton, the writer.
to disturb	A regular active verb, in the infinitive mood,	*To*, a noun, meaning *end* or *object*, and used to point out the other ob-

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
	and governed by compels.	ject of *compels*, which may be called the remote or secondary object, Milton being the direct or immediate object. *Disturb*, a verbal noun, the object of the act *compel*, pointed out by the noun *to*.
season	A noun, objective case, and governed by the active verb *disturb*.	A noun, and the object of the verbal name *disturb*.
due	An adjective qualifying *season*.	The same.
For	A copulative conjunction.	A noun, meaning *cause*, and always pointing out the cause of something that has been affirmed.
Lycidas	The nominative case of *is*.	The agent of *is*.
is	An irregular neuter verb, agreeing with Lycidas, in the third person.	An irregular active verb, of which Lycidas is the agent. *
dead	An adjective, qualifying Lycidas.	The same.
ere	A preposition.	An adjective, qualifying *Lycidas*, its meaning like that of the word *be-fore*, explained above.

* This is perhaps the strongest example which can be brought against the position, that *all* verbs express action,

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
his	A possessive adjective pronoun qualifying *prime.*	An adjective qualifying *prime* and referring to *Lycidas*, the third person.
prime	A noun in the objective case and governed by *ere.*	A noun expressing a period of life, but not the object of any verb. Possibly *ere* may qualify *prime*, as *fore* qualifies *year* in a previous sentence.
hath left	An irregular active verb. Indicative mood, perfect tense, and connected by *and* to *is*, or agreeing with *he* understood.	*Hath* is an irregular active verb, present tense, and having Lycidas for its agent. *Left* is an adjective formed from the verb *leave* and qualifying *peer.* The proper construction being 'and hath not his peer left or remaining.'

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for, *to be dead*, seems to exclude all possibility of action. This is a defect of language, and there is no active verb, which may not have its force destroyed by the words associated with it, as *I love not, I killed none*, in which sentences there is no loving nor killing. I am not prepared, however, to say that a dead body does not exist, for it certainly is not annihilated, and it must *be* or *not be*. Its existence may have been modified, but not destroyed. It *is*, and it is *in motion*, preparing to assume a new form of being. Besides, it is no breach of propriety to attribute active qualities to the dead, for we say the dead warn us, shock us, &c. Active verbs are always used to express negation of action. If *be* ever express action, it always does; if it never express action, it is the only exception to a general rule, and should not affect the general system of verbs. This question is more particularly considered in the grammar.

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
not	An adverb qualifying the verb *hath left.*	A contraction of *no whit*, *no* being an adjective qualifying *whit*, and *whit* a noun of quantity neither agent nor object of any verb.
peer.	A noun, governed in the objective case by *hath left.*	A noun, the object of *hath.*

Who would not sing for Lycidas? he knew
Himself to sing, and build the lofty rhyme.

Who	An interrogative pronoun, the nominative case of *would sing.*	An adjective, qualifying *person* understood.
would sing	An irregular neuter verb, in the potential mood, imperfect tense, and having *who* for its nominative case.	*Would* an active verb, the past form of *will*, having the person indicated by *who* for its agent. *Sing*, a verbal name or noun, the object of *would.*
not	An adverb.	As in the preceding sentence.
for	A preposition.	A noun meaning *cause* and pointing out Lycidas as the cause of the singing.
Lycidas	A noun in the objective case, and governed by *for.*	A noun, the cause indicated by *for.*
he	A personal pronoun, standing instead of Lycidas, and the nominative case to *knew.*	An adjective, qualifying *self* in the compound *him-self.*
knew	An irregular ac-	An irregular active verb,

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
	tive verb, whose nominative case is *he.*	of the past form, whose agent is *self.* This is an instance where *knew* and *could* are synonymous, *can* or *ken* and *know* having originally the same meaning.
Himself	A pronoun, nominative case, in apposition with *he.*	A compound of *him* and *self. Him* is an adjective qualifying *self,* and a remnant of that period of English literature when pronouns had a less definite division of cases and persons than at present. *Self* is a noun, the agent of *knew.*
to sing,	An irregular neuter verb in the infinitive mood and governed by knew.	*To* is a noun meaning end or object and designating the object of *knew* which is the verbal name, *sing.*
build	A regular active verb, infinitive mood.	A verbal noun, the object of *knew,* or of *and,* it being the object *added.*
lofty	An adjective qualifying rhyme.	An adjective composed of *loft,* height, and the adjective affix, *y.* It qualifies *rhyme.*
rhyme.	Noun, the object of *build.*	Same

He must not float upon his watery bier
Unwept, and welter to the parching wind,
Without the meed of some melodious tear.

He	A personal pronoun, nominative case to *must float.*	An adjective qualifying *Lycidas,* understood.

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
must float	An irregular neuter verb, potential mood, imperfect tense, I suppose, though Mr Murray does not say so, as his followers do.	*Must*, an active verb, and the only one in English that retains its primitive form unchanged. Present tense, and has Lycidas for its agent. *Float*, a verbal noun, the object of *must*.
not	As before explained.	
upon	A preposition.	A compound adjective qualifying *Lycidas*.
bier	A noun, objective case and governed by *upon*.	A noun, and either not the object of any verb, or the *remote* object of *float*.
unwept	An adjective qualifying *he*.	An adjective compounded of the verbal adjective *wept* and the negative prefix *un*. It qualifies *Lycidas*, understood.
welter	Potential mood, *must* being understood before it.	Verbal noun, object of *must*, or *and*, meaning *add*.
to	A preposition.	A noun meaning end or object, which end or object always follows it closely.
wind	Noun, objective case, governed by *to*.	Noun, the *remote* object of *welter* before indicated by *to*.
without	A preposition.	A compound of *with* and *out*. *With* means *be* in this case, and its agent is *meed*. *Out* is an adjective qualifying meed. *Out* is thus compared. *Out*, *outer*, or as it is contracted, *utter*, *out-*

Text.	*Murray.*	*True English Grammar.*
		most or *utmost*, or, what is unusual, most is added to the second degree *outer* or *utter*, and making *uttermost* or *outermost*.
meed	A noun, objective case, and governed by *without*.	A noun, the agent of *with* in the word *without*.
of	A preposition.	A noun meaning *origin* or *source* according to Dr Rees, and always indicating that a cause or source follows close to it. Or, perhaps, a verb, always equivalent to some form of the verb *have*. In this case meaning *has*, and having *tear* for its agent. See grammar, p. 106.

The idea of relation or possession, which is connected with *of*, naturally flows from either hypothesis. Dr Rees says *of* and *from* are synonymous although differently *used*.

Which system leads to the most thorough investigation of the *structure* of language, the *meaning* of words and sentences, and of course to the *most correct use* of language, it remains for the competent and unprejudiced to decide. One thing is certain, that there is no great difficulty in learning the new system, for there is not an idea advanced in the course of this parsing, which is not expressed in the small

grammar, and my highest grammar class, which consists of more than twenty, who are, with one or two exceptions, under thirteen years of age, and of whom more than half were ignorant of any grammar before the True English Grammar was published, parsed the above paragraph, exactly as I have done, with hardly one mistake.

It is possible that the consequences which I have deduced from the leading principles of our great philologists, may be in some unimportant respects inaccurate; and that, in the details of a system drawn from so many sources, I may have erred. It would be wonderful, if, under the disadvantages of the case, I had not done so. All I can promise is my thanks to the more discerning who may candidly set me right, and my fixed determination not to be laughed out of my common sense by the interested, self complacent, or malicious.

THE END.

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